

Curiosity

A Book of Pictures, Quotes, and Reflections

*Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace
National Historic Site*

My name is

*Looking back on his life,
Theodore recounted the beginning of
his great love for natural history,
when he was 7 years old.*

I remember distinctly the first day that I started on my career as zoologist. I was walking up Broadway, and as I passed the market to which I used sometimes to be sent before breakfast to get strawberries I suddenly saw a dead seal laid out on a slab of wood. That seal filled me with every possible feeling of romance and adventure.

Boyhood and Youth,
An Autobiography, 1913

Do you have a cherished memory?
Recollect an experience from your heart.

[illegible]

*Theodore found his enthusiasm to be
inexplicable.*

I can no more explain why I like “natural history” than why I like California canned peaches; nor why I do not care for that enormous brand of natural history which deals with invertebrates any more than why I do not care for brandied peaches. All I can say is that almost as soon as I began to read at all I began to like to read about the natural history of beasts and birds and the more formidable or interesting reptiles and fishes.

My Life as a Naturalist,
The American Museum Journal, 1918

What do you enjoy?

Consider what are the subjects in school that make you the happiest, what areas interest you most of all.

[illegible]

READER

Teedie, as Theodore was nicknamed, was a prolific reader. He would always curl up in the family library in his favorite chair, absorbed in a book.

There was very little effort made to compel me to read books, my father and mother having the good sense not to try to get me to read anything I did not like... I was given the chance to read books that they thought I ought to read, but if I did not like them I was then given some other good book that I did like.

Boyhood and Youth,
An Autobiography, 1913

*Definition of **prolific**:*



Teedie seated for a portrait in his red velvet tassel chair, in the collections at Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace.

Think about ones that have made a big impact on your actions and your attitude, to recommend.

[illegible]

OBSERVER

Teedie was a keen observer. He would make detailed sketches of animals that he saw and take notes on their habits on pieces of paper and in his journals.

What is most needed is not the ability to see what very few people can see, but to see what almost anybody can see, but nobody takes the trouble to look at.

My Life as a Naturalist,
The American Museum Journal, 1918

*Definition of **keen**:*



Two of Teedie's sketches when he was around 11, in the Theodore Roosevelt Collection in the Houghton Library at Harvard University.



Details of birds in ink drawn when Teedie was between 13 and 17, from Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace.



Look around you and pick out something.

[illegible]

COLLECTOR

Teedie was an avid collector. Along with adopting many pets, he would obtain especially birds and also plants for his taxidermy and herbarium collections.

[M]y triumphs consisted in such things as bringing home and raising—by the aid of milk and a syringe—a family of very young gray squirrels, in fruitlessly endeavoring to tame an excessively unamiable woodchuck, and in making friends with a gentle, pretty, trustful white-footed mouse which reared her family in an empty flower pot...

My Life as a Naturalist,
The American Museum Journal, 1918

*Definition of **avid**:*



A European Starling,
(top) and Purple Finch
(bottom), collected by
Teedie when he was 14,
in the archives at
**Theodore Roosevelt
Birthplace.**

Other specimens that he
collected went to the
**American Museum of
Natural History** in New
York and the **Smithsonian
Institution** in Washington.



NOVEMBER, WEDNESDAY 3. 1869.

THURSDAY 4.

Spent on the 6



FRIDAY 5.

One of five samples of plants pressed into the pages of a diary by Teedie when he was 10, on his trip to Europe with his family, in the Theodore Roosevelt Collection.

Consider do you collect pets and specimens, like Teedie, or pictures and quotes, or something else.

[illegible]

A supporter of conservation,
as president, Theodore Roosevelt
protected vast amounts of land
that would later be part of the
National Park Service,
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
and **U.S. Forest Service.**

[illegible]

*Keep your eyes on the stars
and your feet on the ground.*

- Theodore Roosevelt

[Curiosity]

[Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace
National Historic Site]